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CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EAP-01

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EXCISE *F7*

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-13	ADS-00	AID-01	AIT-03	AMAD-01	CIAE-00
	COME-00	DODE-00	ANHR-01	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00
	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04	L-03	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02
	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	RP-10	SIL-01
	SNP-01	SP-01	SR-01	SS-01	STR-18	TRSE-00	T-01
	USIE-00	/099W					

P 240523Z OCT 91
FM AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2009
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY
AMCONSUL SHANGHAI
AMCONSUL SHENYANG
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AIT TAIPEI 1319

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
() EXCISE () DECLASSIFY EO Citations
() DENY IN PART
FOIA Exemptions B1, B6 TS authority to
PA Exemptions () CLASSIFY as () S or () C Sec.
() DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 GUANGZHOU 06598

BEIJING PLEASE PASS CHENGDU

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, ELAB, ETRD, CH
SUBJECT: JOHN KAMM'S VISIT TO MEIXIAN PRISON

REF: BEIJING 033518

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
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2. SUMMARY. HONG KONG HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST JOHN KAMM VISITED MEIXIAN PRISON IN GUANGDONG PROVINCE OCTOBER 22-23. HE SAW NO SIGN OF PRISON MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS DESTINED FOR EXPORT NOR OF ANY POLITICAL PRISONERS. HE DID CONFIRM TWO PRISONERS INCARCERATED IN MEIXIAN FOR THEIR RELIGIOUS VIEWS HAD BEEN RELEASED EARLIER THIS YEAR. MEIXIAN PRISON, ONE OF GUANGDONG'S LARGEST, HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING A "HARD" PRISON.

END SUMMARY.

3. HONG KONG BUSINESSMAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST JOHN KAMM RETURNED FROM A VISIT TO A PRISON IN GUANGDONG PROVINCE'S MEIXIAN COUNTY OCTOBER 23 AND GAVE

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US A READOUT ON WHAT HE SAW

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5. DURING HIS VISIT TO MEIXIAN, KAMM LEARNED BOTH MAI AND SUN WERE RELEASED LAST MAY SHORTLY AFTER KAMM HAD FIRST ENQUIRED ABOUT THEM WITH THE MOJ. MAI AND FU BELONG TO A SMALL PROTESTANT SECT CALLED THE "SHOUTERS." THEY WERE ARRESTED IN 1983 AND SENTENCED TO LONG SENTENCES (12 AND 9 YEARS, RESPECTIVELY) IN 1986. KAMM WAS TOLD AT MEIXIAN THEY HAD BEEN RELEASED BECAUSE OF THEIR ADVANCED AGE.

6. KAMM WAS ALSO TOLD THERE WERE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS AT MEIXIAN WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME "TAIWAN SPIES."

B1, B6

WHAT HE SAW WERE A LOT OF PRISONERS WITH NEW SHOES AND FULL LUNCH PLATES. KAMM SAID PRISONERS SEEMED GENUINELY PLEASED TO HAVE A FOREIGN VISITOR. WHETHER IT WAS THE NOVELTY OR THE HOPE OF IMPROVED CONDITIONS, HE COULD NOT SAY, BUT HE SUSPECTED IT WAS THE LATTER.

7. THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH TIME, APPARENTLY, FOR ANY EXTENSIVE SPRUCING UP IN ANTICIPATION OF KAMM'S ARRIVAL. PRISON PRODUCTION SEEMED TO BE CONFINED TO SOME KIND OF WHEEL ASSEMBLY LINE FOR LOCAL MOTOR

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VEHICLES--NOTHING LIKELY TO BE EXPORTED TO THE U.S. OR
OTHER COUNTRIES. AS IN MANY PRISONS (OR, AS THE MOJ
CALLS THEM, "LAOGAI DUI," I.E., LABOR REFORM CAMPS),
PRISON STAFF FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE SET UP SMALL PRIVATE
ENTERPRISES AROUND THE PRISON TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR
FAMILIES' INCOME. KAMM LAMENTED ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF
INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF PRISON LABOR PRODUCTS BEING
MADE FOR EXPORT WAS SEPARATING THESE KINDS OF PRODUCTS
FROM THOSE ACTUALLY MADE BY THE PRISONERS.

8.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 GUANGZHOU 06598

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. THE LARGE NUMBER OF PRISONS (A TOTAL OF 131) "NEWSWEEK" REPORTED IN A RECENT ARTICLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE U.S. TELEVISION "60 MINUTES" EXPOSE ON CHINESE PRISONS INCLUDED THE LOCAL DETENTION CENTERS RUN BY THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU (PSB) AS WELL AS THE MOJ FACILITIES. PRISONERS TEND TO STAY IN THE DETENTION CENTERS UNTIL SENTENCED AND, IF THE SENTENCE IS LESS THAN THREE YEARS, CONTINUE TO SERVE THEIR TIME WITH THE PSB RATHER THAN THE MOJ. THE PSB HAS A DETENTION CENTER IN AT LEAST EVERY COUNTY IN GUANGDONG PROVINCE. KAMM SAID GUANGDONG'S "LARGE NUMBER" OF PRISONS AND DETENTION CENTERS REFLECTS, MORE THAN ANYTHING, GUANGDONG'S OPENNESS. UNLIKE OTHER PROVINCES, GUANGDONG'S DETENTION CENTERS ARE EVEN LISTED IN THE PHONE BOOK.

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10. [REDACTED]

11. KAMM WILL BE PUBLICIZING HIS VISIT TO MEIXIAN AND ALSO THE RELEASE OF THE TWO RELIGIOUS PRISONERS.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL